

MPEP §806.05(d), the Office concludes that the claimed method for purifying N-[N-[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)propyl]-L-alpha-aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1- methyl ester “has separate utility such as method for the purification of method for purifying N-[N-[3-(3-methoxy-4-hydroxyphenyl)propyl]-L-alpha-aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1- methyl ester formed by the peptidic coupling of a previously N-alkylated aspartyl residue”. However, the Office has not provided reasons and/or examples to support this conclusion. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the Office has failed to meet the burden necessary in order to sustain the Restriction Requirement. Withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully traverse on the grounds that the Office has not shown that a burden exists in searching the entire application.

Further, MPEP §803 states as follows:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on its merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

Applicants submit that a search of all claims would not constitute a serious burden on the Office, particularly in view of the fact that that Groups I and II are classified in the same subclass (class 560, subclass 40).

Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified application is now in condition for examination on the merits, and early notice of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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